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ABSTRACT

This report presents the findings from the 1999-2000 Germanna Community College Student Outcomes Assessment. First, remedial education was evaluated through an analysis of placement score and enrollment in developmental courses. Findings from this area include: (1) about 60% of students were recommended for developmental coursework, and only 60% of those students actually enrolled in such courses; (2) students were recommended for math courses more than English courses; and (3) the number of students urged to take such English courses over the previous two years had increased by 15%, and less than 50% of those students actually enrolled. Transfer student success was also evaluated through an analysis of transfer data provided by senior institutions. Here, findings include: (1) the proportion of minority transfer students was low; (2) males were found to be overrepresented in the transfer group; (3) forty-two percent of transfer students were "unclassified" in their field of study; (4) female transfer students gained admission at higher rates; and (5) Germanna graduates were not more likely than non-graduates to be admitted to four-year institutions. The report ends with a special topic section on Developmental Enrollment of High School Students, which states that the rate of students coming directly from high schools and enrolling in developmental courses has remained constant between 50 and 60% over the last ten years. (CJW)

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ED 450 860

Germanna Community College

Student Outcomes Assessment 1999-2000

A Progress Report to the

Virginia Community College System

H W Ward

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September 15, 2000

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Section I.

Executive Summary

Student Outcomes Assessment 1999-2000 presents a brief summary of new findings and actions in two areas of Germanna Community College's overall student outcomes assessment program, according to the VCCS reporting guidelines for 2000. Section II summarizes analysis and activities in "remedial" education. During the 1999-2000 academic year, the Dean and Directors of Instruction reviewed the status of developmental offerings at the College. As a result of this review, and based partly on the assessment evidence presented here, faculty coordinators will lead a thorough examination of placement, skill attainment, and student success in developmental education. This report provides highlights of the analysis described in two reports on developmental education, which are included as appendices. It also details the actions which have been taken during the last two years—the most significant of which is a substantial increase in reading placement test score cutoff levels—and those which are planned for the coming year.

Section III reports findings regarding transfer student success, based on expanded data which has become available since the last complete report on this topic in 1996. Although the completeness of data on transfer students remains a significant problem, the analysis points to specific actions which will be undertaken to improve the success of students who transfer. The most recent analysis on transfer success is contained in a report included in the appendix.

Section IV addresses the VCCS special topic for this reporting cycle, developmental course enrollment by high school graduates. Based on the required RADSS analysis, the section (and charts in the appendix) provide data on this issue and a description of the ongoing exchange of information between Germanna and its regional high schools.

In addition to the specific actions described in the body of the report, Germanna has taken two more general steps to improve its utilization of student outcomes assessment for improving instruction: First, all of the action items listed in this report have been assigned to a faculty or staff member for follow-up throughout the year. This will provide a more specific mechanism for tracking progress on these issues. Secondly, the College has appointed a standing committee for Student Outcomes Assessment, consisting of five faculty members with the Assessment Coordinator serving *ex officio*. The Assessment Committee will work to promote knowledge of

and participation in assessment activities throughout the faculty, and will provide a focus and forum for discussion of assessment issues. The appointment of a standing committee should provide more continuity than did the previous approach, where the Assessment Coordinator worked with individual faculty members or discipline coordinators.

Section II.

Remedial Education

Goal/Objective Being Assessed	Evaluation Method(s)	Findings	Actions Taken Or To Be Taken
Examination of patterns of recommendation for and enrollment in developmental courses	Analysis of placement scores and enrollment in developmental courses using RADSS	Approximately 60% of curriculum-placed students are recommended for developmental coursework, and approximately 60% of those students actually enroll. Combined with self-enrolled students, approximately 40% of curriculum-placed students enroll in developmental courses. Students are much more likely to be recommended for developmental math than for developmental English. The proportion of students recommended for developmental math has remained stable at approximately 56% for the last six years. The proportion of students recommended for developmental English has increased in the last two years from 12-15% to 25-30%. The increase is due to a change in the reading placement test cutoff score which took effect for the 1998-99 academic year (*See item 2 below*). Although the proportion of students recommended for developmental English courses increased, the percentage of those students who then actually enrolled dropped sharply (from 61% to less than 50%) The increase in students recommended for developmental English has been almost entirely related to the changes in reading placement.	The statement regarding placement testing requirements has been revised for the current Germanna class schedule; it is now much more clear and direct. A similar revised statement will be added to the next College Catalog. During 1999-2000, the Dean and Directors of Instruction reviewed the College's developmental offerings. As a result, a full-time faculty member with experience in developmental English will have release time during 2000-01 to ensure that developmental English course offerings are appropriate and to coordinate communication between adjunct and full-time faculty. A developmental math coordinator has also been appointed from among the full-time math faculty.

Goal/Objective Being Assessed	Evaluation Method(s)	Findings (*Continued*)	Actions Taken or To Be Taken (*Continued*)
(*Continued*) Examination of patterns of recommendation for and enrollment in developmental courses		Similarly, the decrease in proportion of students enrolling in the developmental courses is largely attributable to developmental reading. (*See item 2 below.*)	On 8/18/00, the Director of Institutional Research presented an overview of developmental placement and enrollment to all faculty, in order to acquaint faculty members with the scope of developmental enrollment, and to initiate a focused discussion on the topic for the upcoming year. During 2000-01, Instruction and Student Services will meet together to: ▪ review the advising process to identify who needs to be advised and who will do the advising; ▪ conduct regular advising workshops for faculty and staff, with updated information on policies and procedures; and ▪ review the academic calendar and registration schedule, in order to ensure more time for thorough academic advising. Placement test score cutoff levels in SIS will be revised to implement System-wide standards beginning with Spring 2001.

Goal/Objective Being Assessed	Evaluation Method(s)	Findings	Actions Taken Or To Be Taken
Examination of patterns of recommendation for and enrollment in developmental *reading* courses	Analysis of placement scores and enrollment in developmental reading courses using RADSS	During 1997-98, English faculty observed that students were having difficulty with reading comprehension in the content areas. Faculty also conducted an informal survey, and learned that the placement test cutoff scores for placement into developmental reading were significantly lower than at other VCCS colleges. Approximately 25% of new students do not have any reading placement scores on file. *Findings following raised reading placement cutoffs* The number of new curriculum-placed students recommended for placement in developmental reading increased from 4% in 1997-98 to 26% in 1999-2000. Enrollment in developmental reading courses increased from only 37 students in 1997-98 to 158 students during 1999-2000. Despite the enrollment increase, the *proportion* of students recommended for developmental reading who then enrolled in that course actually declined. The proportion decline in developmental reading enrollment had begun as early as 1994-95, when it dropped from 53% to 21%. The proportion has remained generally below 30% ever since	Cutoff scores for placement into developmental ENG 04 were raised beginning in 1998-99, and a new placement level of co-requisite ENG 06 was instituted. As a result, the cutoff scores for "unrestricted" placement were raised substantially. *Actions for 2000-01 and beyond*: The developmental English coordinator will review developmental reading offerings during 2000-01. All entering curriculum-placed students will complete the reading placement test. The proportion of students recommended for developmental reading courses who actually enroll in those courses will be increased, as follows: ▪ The phrase "college-level reading is required" will be added to appropriate course descriptions in the next course catalog. ▪ Advisors will receive additional training on new reading placement levels and procedures as part of the workshops mentioned above. ▪ Instructors will receive additional information on completion of prerequisites, as noted above.

Goal/Objective Being Assessed	Evaluation Method(s)	Findings	Actions Taken Or To Be Taken
Success rate for students enrolled in developmental courses	Analysis of enrollment in developmental courses using RADSS	Approximately 60% of the students who enroll for developmental math and English courses complete them satisfactorily. This includes a small number of students who are repeating the developmental course. Success rates in developmental English courses have decreased during the last three years, especially in ENG 04, the primary course for reading skills (*see also item #2 regarding developmental reading*).	Developmental English faculty (and other faculty) will continue an ongoing discussion of the skills required for College-level reading and writing, and how to verify that students are acquiring these skills in developmental courses. Faculty will develop methods to assess completion of the exit competencies defined by the VCCS Developmental Task Force. Math faculty will pursue a similar discussion, and will develop methods to assess completion of the exit competencies in arithmetic and algebra defined by the VCCS Task Force. As noted above, the developmental English and math coordinators will facilitate such discussions during 2000-01. Regularly scheduled discipline meetings will provide the forum. The College will improve the success rate in developmental courses through: ▪ increased use of tutoring services, and coordination of these services with coursework; and ▪ expanded emphasis on basic skills in content courses.

Goal/Objective Being Assessed	Evaluation Method(s)	Findings	Actions Taken Or To Be Taken
Success of developmental students in completing college-level math courses	Analysis of enrollment in developmental math courses and in MTH 151/163 using RADSS	The analysis indicates that students who chose *not* to enroll in developmental math were more successful in their collegiate math course, even when a developmental course was recommended. This suggests that some of these students were misplaced into the developmental math course. Specific analysis reveals that successful completion of MTH 04 and MTH 05 does enhance success in the collegiate course. These courses are the appropriate prerequisites. However, a number of students enrolled in collegiate math even after failing to complete these prerequisites, and these students fared poorly there. Complicating the analysis, a further group of students enrolled in collegiate math after completing only MTH 03. However, these students were relatively successful in the collegiate course, indicating that they may have initially been wrongly placed. The findings suggest both that the placement recommendations need to be examined more closely, and that prerequisites in the collegiate courses should be enforced.	The analysis supports a stricter enforcement of prerequisites, although with a provision for re-assessment of the student after initial placement. Such a re-assessment should be recorded in the Student Information System; the feasibility of this will be reviewed. Faculty teaching developmental math and those teaching collegiate math will develop a common set of skills as the basis for assessment of successful completion of one level and preparation for the next. The developmental math coordinator will facilitate this discussion during 2000-01. The coordinator will also explore the feasibility of common exams for developmental math courses.

Goal/Objective Being Assessed	Evaluation Method(s)	Findings	Actions Taken Or To Be Taken
Success of developmental students in completing college-level writing courses	Analysis of enrollment in developmental English courses and in ENG 111 using RADSS	The success rate in ENG 111 College Composition is essentially equivalent for students who enrolled in developmental English, and for students who were not recommended for developmental. This indicates that students are receiving an appropriate preparation in their developmental course. Students successfully completing ENG 01 received slightly lower actual grades in ENG 111, on average, than did students who were not recommended for ENG 01.	No action is indicated at this time.
Success of developmental students in completing Business Math course	Analysis of enrollment in developmental math courses and in BUS 121 (Business Math I) using RADSS	The analysis of outcomes in Business Math presents a mixed picture. There does not appear to be a relationship between placement recommendation and enrollment in developmental math courses and the outcome in BUS 121. Although fewer of the students who took a developmental math course were successful in BUS 121, the difference is not large. Further, it appears that only a small number of students is utilizing the recommended prerequisite of MTH 02 in preparation for BUS 121, and those students who do take MTH 02 do not necessarily fare as well as others.	Developmental math and business faculty will be review the specific skills covered in MTH 02. The analysis will determine whether MTH 02 should be focused on preparation for business courses, and/or whether another course could offer basic arithmetic skills. This discussion will incorporate the exit competencies in arithmetic and algebra defined by the VCCS Developmental Task Force, in distinguishing the appropriate role for MTH 02. If appropriate, more students should be enrolled in MTH 02 as a prerequisite to BUS 121. Diagnostic testing in BUS 121 (pretest and post-test) will be formalized, and the results will be collected for analysis.

Goal/Objective Being Assessed	Evaluation Method(s)	Findings	Actions Taken Or To Be Taken
Success of students in completing college-level courses based on developmental reading background	Analysis of developmental reading placement and outcomes in college-level courses using RADSS	*Prior to 1998-99* Students recommended for ENG 04 earned lower average grades overall in the college-level courses they completed. Students who completed ENG 04 earned higher grades in collegiate courses than did non-completers. However, these grades were still lower than those earned by all students—especially in math, science, and occ/tech. This suggests that the ENG 04 course did not necessarily give students all the preparation they needed to be successful. Students recommended for ENG 04 who did not enroll in that course earned only slightly lower grades in their collegiate courses than did students who completed ENG 04. Overall, the effect of completing ENG 04 prior to 1998-99 did not seem strong. *Beginning in 1998-99* Students recommended for ENG 04 who completed that course earned higher grades in college-level courses than did students who did not complete ENG 04. However, grades earned by completers were lower than overall average grades, and were lower than grades earned by recommended students who did not take ENG 04. Students recommended for and completing ENG 06 achieved grades slightly lower than the mean for all students.	Further analysis, and continued discussions between developmental and content-area faculty, will specify the link between success in particular courses and reading skills. Placement recommendations with regard to reading skills can then be made more specific. The phrase "college-level reading is required" will be added to appropriate course descriptions in the next course catalog. The developmental English coordinator will review developmental reading offerings during 2000-01. The coordinator will determine whether the co-requisite approach employed for ENG 06 would be effective for ENG 04 as well.

Goal/Objective Being Assessed	Evaluation Method(s)	Findings	Actions Taken Or To Be Taken
(*Continued*) Success of students in completing college-level courses based on developmental reading background		(*Continued*) These grades were substantially higher than those of recommended students who did not complete, although only slightly higher than the grades of recommended students who did not enroll. Enrollment in ENG 06 (or ENG 07) appears to raise the average grades earned by students recommended for that course, while enrollment in ENG 04 does not produce a corresponding increase.	
Persistence in enrollment based on developmental background	Analysis of enrollment in developmental courses and student persistence using RADSS	(*Analysis for this item is contained in Table 7 of a report on overall persistence, included here as an appendix. Further statistical analysis is also summarized here.*) Initial analysis indicates that students who enroll in a developmental course demonstrate similar patterns of persistence in their enrollment toward a degree or certificate, whether or not they were required to take the developmental course. Most students at Germanna do not graduate. It appears that students who enroll in developmental courses may continue their enrollment longer before eventually stopping out or completing a degree. However, the reasons for students "stopping out" are not entirely clear, so that the impact of developmental enrollment on that process is also unclear.	No action is indicated at this time. Further analysis is required.

Section III.

Transfer Student Success

Goal/Objective Being Assessed	Evaluation Method(s)	Findings	Actions Taken Or To Be Taken
Evaluation of demographic background characteristics of transfer applicants	Analysis of transfer data provided by senior institutions combined with RADSS data.	Primary application destinations (in order): Mary Washington College; VCU; James Madison U.; Radford U.; George Mason U. The proportion of minority students among transfer applicants is lower than in the student population overall; African-Americans are especially underrepresented. Males are somewhat overrepresented among transfer applicants. The majority (57%) of transfer applicants were *not* graduates. For 51% of transfer applicants, the curricular program pursued at Germanna was a transfer degree; however, 42% were "unclassified".	Special attention will be given to support services which would encourage more female and minority students to pursue further education after Germanna, when that is consistent with their personal goals. Instruction and Student Services will use regularly scheduled combined staff meetings during 2000-01 to identify actions which can encourage these students to transfer. Germanna will explore the feasibility of developing services to assist students with transfer, even when these students do not complete a transfer degree.

Goal/Objective Being Assessed	Evaluation Method(s)	Findings	Actions Taken Or To Be Taken
To promote student success in gaining admission to the transfer institution.	Analysis of transfer data provided by senior institutions combined with RADSS data.	Two primary application destinations (Mary Washington College and James Madison U.) did not provide data on students who apply but do not enroll. This is a serious limitation on the admission rate analysis. Overall 75% of transfer applicants are accepted for admission. The admission rate is higher for ODU (94%). Admission rates are lower for UVa (70%) and Virginia Tech (42%). There was no significant difference in admission rates based on race or ethnicity. Female transfer applicants gained admission at slightly higher rates, although enrollment rates for male and female applicants were the same. Overall, Germanna graduates were *not* more likely than non-graduates to be admitted, and students enrolled in transfer programs were *not* more likely to be admitted. However, there were specific nuances to this finding: Among students in occupational programs, graduates were more likely to be admitted than non-graduates. Graduates were somewhat more likely to be admitted at GMU, ODU, Uva, and Radford. However, graduates were *not* more likely to be admitted at Va. Tech or VCU. Based on the students who enrolled, transfers to JMU were primarily non-graduates, while transfers to MWC were primarily graduates.	Mary Washington and JMU have been contacted directly with a request for data on non-enrollees. MWC does not appear to be able to provide this data; JMU is working on the data, but has not provided it as of this report. The College is pursuing this information further. In Spring 2000, the Curriculum Committee revised the College's list of transfer electives, based on a review by faculty of the courses accepted at our primary transfer destinations. The revised list was published on the College Web site. The Curriculum Committee will review the list annually. During 1999-2000, the Curriculum Committee reviewed Germanna's General Studies degree program, and submitted it to the State Council on Transfer for approval as a transfer program. The program was approved in June 2000. New faculty members will be assigned mentors, to help them learn about advising (including transfer).

Goal/Objective Being Assessed	Evaluation Method(s)	Findings	Actions Taken or To Be Taken (*Continued*)
To promote student success in gaining admission to the transfer institution. (*Continued*)			The following aspects of assessment findings will be incorporated into advisor training workshops to be held during the year: ▪ The transfer data do not indicate any special obstacles in gaining admission for female or minority students; this outcome reinforces the need to encourage these students to pursue transfer where appropriate. ▪ Because overall transfer admission does not appear to be related to completing a transfer degree, the need for transfer support services for students in other curriculum areas is reinforced. ▪ Students in occupational programs should be encouraged to complete a degree if they intend to transfer. (This information should also be added to program brochures and the Catalog.) ▪ Although it is important for advisors and students to make contact with the transfer institution directly, the information provided here provides some additional specific evidence regarding the admissions experience at specific institutions. The information reported here will also be conveyed to students in new student workshop sessions.

Goal/Objective Being Assessed	Evaluation Method(s)	Findings	Actions Taken Or To Be Taken
Success after transfer (academic standing)	Analysis of transfer data provided by senior institutions combined with RADSS data.	Most transfer institutions do not supply an actual data element regarding academic standing; minimum GPA of 2.00 is used here as a proxy. Overall 79% of transfer enrollees were in good standing one year after transfer. At JMU, 87% were in good standing. ODU (72%) and GMU (67%) success rates were slightly lower than others. Overall, graduates and non-graduates showed identical success rates on academic standing after transfer. However, graduates fared somewhat better than non-graduates after one year at GMU, MWC, and VCU. Among graduates, occupational graduates fared somewhat better than transfer graduates. Among non-graduates, those whose curriculum at Germanna was "unclassified" were more likely in good standing after transfer than the program-placed non-graduates. Overall, transfer students who enrolled did equally well, in terms of academic standing after transfer, regardless of the curriculum pursued at Germanna.	In general, transfer students are successful, and no major action is indicated. However, individual findings provide some specific guidance for transfer advising and further research. These will be communicated in advising workshops, as noted in #2 above. The lower success rates at ODU and GMU will be analyzed further, in terms of curriculum at Germanna and the senior institution and other variables . Again, the findings indicate that occupational students should be encouraged to complete a degree if they are transferring. (*See also items 1 and 2*)

Goal/Objective Being Assessed	Evaluation Method(s)	Findings	Actions Taken Or To Be Taken
Success after transfer (GPA)	Analysis of transfer data provided by senior institutions combined with RADSS data.	Most students experienced a decline in GPA after transfer, as much as one point. The average decline for graduates was 0.78, for non-graduates 0.76. However, declines within this range during the first year can be considered a "normal" part of the transfer experience. Among graduates, the largest declines were at JMU (1.96) and UVa (1.25). Among non-graduates, the largest declines were at JMU (1.07) and MWC (1.07). Graduates at ODU, Radford, and VCU experienced smaller declines.	The somewhat larger declines at JMU, UVa, and MWC require further analysis, by Germanna curriculum and/or course discipline. These findings will be used as part of program review. Mary Washington College has not provided course outcome data. This data will be requested specifically. (*See also item 2*)

Section IV.

Special Topic: Developmental Enrollment of High School Graduates

A. Description

This section is based on an analysis of Germanna students who enroll for the first time in the Fall semester immediately following their high school graduation. The focus of the analysis is on whether these students enroll in developmental courses. Three charts are included in the Appendix: The first shows the trend for graduates enrolling in developmental courses from all service region high schools, from 1990 to 1999. The second indicates the cumulative proportion of graduates enrolling in developmental courses from each of the Germanna service region high schools. The second chart shows the trends in developmental enrollment by year for the six high schools sending the largest number of students to Germanna. (**N.B.** In order to maintain confidentiality, high schools have been assigned code letters on the charts. The letters were assigned at random, and are not related to the high school name in any way.)

B. Analysis

Overall, the proportion of high school graduates who enroll in developmental courses has fluctuated somewhat over the last ten years, but has remained between 50 and 60%. The proportion had dropped for four straight years from 1990-93, but then returned to previous levels for the remainder of the decade. An apparent decrease for the class of 1999 is likely due more to the fact that these students have not yet been enrolled as long, and may be delaying their developmental enrollment.

Differences between high schools across the region are somewhat greater than the fluctuation from year to year, ranging from 47.5% of graduates enrolling in developmental to 66.7%. The highest proportion of developmental enrollment is among graduates from "High School G", with the lowest from "High School L" (47.5%) and "High School E" (48.5%). These three schools send a relatively small number of new graduates to Germanna each year.

The six largest schools in terms of this analysis can be grouped into three categories: schools whose developmental proportion is trending downward (J, M, and D); "High School F" where the proportion is trending upward; and High Schools H and C, where there is not a clear trend.

C. Actions Taken Or To Be Taken

For many years, Germanna has held an annual Counselors Luncheon, where college admission procedures and curriculum developments are reviewed. Data on the number of students enrolling, as well as their success at Germanna, are distributed at the Counselors Luncheon. Schools are also provided with specific student-identifiable data to allow them to track progress of their graduates who attend Germanna.

During the last two academic years, the College has also scheduled regular meetings with the superintendents of the local school districts. These meetings are high level, including the President and Dean of Instruction, and concern fundamental issues in the collaboration between Germanna and the school districts.

The specific data on developmental enrollment presented here will be included on the agenda for superintendents meetings to be held in Fall 2000. Any specific issues which arise as a result of these meetings will be addressed with the school district concerned.